



**Testimony of Charles DellaRocco, President, AFSCME Local 749
Re: SB 964, Judiciary Committee
March 6, 2019**

Good afternoon Chairpersons Stafstrom and Holder-Winfield; Ranking Members Rebimbas and Kissell; and members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Charles DellaRocco. I am the President of AFSCME Local 749. Our union represents more than 1,500 Judicial Branch, Office of the Public Defender and Division of Criminal Justice employees.

I am here to speak on SB 964, An Act Concerning Court Operations.

Local 749's membership includes more than 200 court recording monitors who are the unheralded backbone of any court proceeding. SB 964, in sections 5 through 9, contains language that we fear would enable the Judicial Branch to achieve something they have long sought, which is to outsource the transcription work performed by the monitors we represent.

Court Monitors earn a modest hourly wage that is much lower than that of the old court reporters (a position that was eliminated). Monitors perform the bulk of their typing of transcripts at home and in lieu of overtime. This a vastly female workforce, and the additional income they earn – and pay Connecticut taxes on – supports themselves and their families. Taking this work away from them would not only slash their pay, it would lead ultimately to the elimination of their jobs.

Again, let me emphasize: Monitors do not get a penny of overtime. The supplemental income they earn is a per page fee set by statute. Trust me – they are a bargain.

This is not a fight about money. Truthfully, I'm not sure what has motivated the Branch to explore outsourcing transcription work to a private vendor. What I do know is this: Losing transcription work would not only devastate our court monitors; it would compromise the integrity of every judicial proceeding, every court case. You would be amazed at the speed and efficiency and dedication of these employees. I urge you to spend some time with them and see what I mean.

In conclusion, please ensure that SB 964 safeguards the highest quality public service performed by state court recording monitors. Our union looks forward to working with you to achieve this.

Thank you for listening. I am happy to answer your questions.